products like fresh and processed fruits, vegetables, floriculture, poultry and dairy products and products of wheat and rice.

Decline in export of rice

3681. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rice export is declining over the years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the necessary steps being taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) The total quantity and value of rice (basmati and non-basmati) exported during the last three years is as under:—

Qty.: MT
Value: Rs. crores

Year	Basmati Rice		Non-Basmati Rice	
	Qty.	Value	Qty.	Value
1998-1999	597793	1876.91	4365888	4403.85
1999-2000	638382	1780.34	1257793	1345.58
2000-2001	848919	2141.94	683194	784.16
2001-2002 (April-January, 2002)	494779	1400.97	1009986	937.30
(April-January, 2001)	665635	1682.69	502636	590.86

(SOURCE: DGCI and S, Kolkata)

The exports of rice depend upon international demand and supply position, domestic demand and supply position, international and domestic prices, consumer preference and varieties traded.

(c) Some of the steps taken to boost the export of rice include publicity campaigns, sending delegations abroad, participating in International trade fairs, inviting potential buyers and providing financial assistance to exporters for improving quality, packaging, brand promotion of products and for conducting market surveys.

Import of melting steel scrap

3682. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appreared in 'The Hindu', Delhi, dated 3rd April, 2002 under the caption "Unexploded rocket arrives in melting steel scrap";

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the precautionary measures taken by Government to avoid such incidents in future while importing steel scrap from foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At the time of unloading of a consignment of 10 containers containing heavy melting steel scrap at ICD, Tughlakabad in the morning of 2-4-2002 a mis-fired rocket made in 1969, suddenly exploded. As a result of explosion, the driver and the conductor of the truck who were supposed to load the scrap and were present nearby got injured and received immediate treatment in a nearby hospital. The entire consignment, which was shipped from Sharjah and originated from an African country, namely Kenya, was immediately detained and destuffed. Further examination of the goods took place in the following days in the presence of explosive experts and local police, officials of CISF, CONCOR and Customs Officers. The total weight of scrap was 212 MT (Net). On examination, the piece that had exploded was found to be part of mis-fired heat rocket of 1969 make. The remnants of said part were taken over by the explosive experts for further examination. The police authorities completed their investigation and allowed clearance of consignment with an advice that the consignment may be handled